

# THE BIG ISSUE

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S.C. DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG ABUSE SERVICES

## CAMPAIGN KEEPS ALCOHOL “OUT OF THEIR HANDS”

The sixth annual “Out of Their Hands” spring “blitz” that helps focus attention on the dangers of underage alcohol use will run April 1-30 throughout South Carolina. Coordinated by the S.C. Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS), the state’s Alcohol Enforcement Teams (AETs) and their partners will engage community residents, businesses, and others to deny alcohol access to those youth who are under 21.

With spring break and prom season in full swing, April is prime time for many teens to “let loose,” have fun, and forget about the worries of school. While enjoying these springtime festivities is a great way for teens to recharge their batteries, teens who choose to drink alcohol need to beware. Local law enforcement will be out in full force during April to crack down on underage drinking – especially teens who drink and drive. Officers will be conducting increased party patrols to stop underage drinking before it begins, and will step up other enforcement activities such as compliance checks and public safety checkpoints to deter underage drinking and driving.

“The consequences of underage drinking don’t stop with the teen who consumes the alcohol, or even the adult who provides it,” said Bob Toomey, Director

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### DIRECTOR'S CORNER

#### Domestic Violence in Our State



South Carolina’s rate of women murdered by men is the second highest in the country. Domestic violence is anathema to the foundational morals and values of our state, and burdens families, communities and entire generations with incalculable costs – both economic and social.

On January 29, Governor Nikki Haley launched a comprehensive initiative to address the culture of domestic violence in our state, issuing an executive order that created the Governor’s Domestic Violence Task Force – a task force for which she personally serves as Chair. This undertaking is profoundly ambitious and incredibly important.

Substance use disorders are inextricably intertwined with domestic violence, sometimes as the cause of the violence, often as an excuse for the violence, and perhaps more than occasionally as a result. As DAODAS Director, I have the opportunity to serve on the Task Force. I am grateful for and proud of the participation of DAODAS employees who serve as members of at least one of its three divisions:

- *Criminal Justice Division* - Taineshia Brooks, Michael George, Dan Walker
- *Victim & Offender Services Division* - Casie Culver, Frankie Long
- *Community Awareness, Education & Outreach Division* - Kaitlin Blanco-Silva, Julie Cole, Jimmy Mount, Michelle Nienhius, Harry Prim

Please contact any one of us if you would like further information or you would like to volunteer.

We all recognize that this problem exists and manifests at the community level, and that solutions need to be community based. Governor Haley has directed that we assess the issue county by county. This approach easily aligns with our prevention efforts – organizing local councils and coalitions to inform and address statewide problems at the local level.

A copy of the executive order may be found at [www.governor.sc.gov/ExecutiveOffice/Pages/ExecutiveOrders.aspx](http://www.governor.sc.gov/ExecutiveOffice/Pages/ExecutiveOrders.aspx)

*Bob Toomey*

## DRUNK DRIVING DECLINES, WHILE DRUG USE BEHIND THE WHEEL RISES

*Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration*

The nation's decades-long campaign to combat drunk driving continues to make our roads safer, but use of marijuana and prescription drugs is increasingly prominent on the highways, creating new safety questions, according to a pair of ground-breaking studies released in February by the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

One study, the latest version of NHTSA's Roadside Survey of Alcohol and Drug Use by Drivers, found that the number of drivers with alcohol in their system has declined by nearly one-third since 2007, and by more than three-quarters since the first Roadside Survey in 1973. But that same survey found a large increase in the number of drivers using marijuana or other illegal drugs. In the 2014 survey, nearly one in four drivers tested positive for at least one drug that could affect safety.

"America made drunk driving a national issue and while there is no victory as long as a single American dies in an alcohol-related crash, a one-third reduction in alcohol use over just seven years shows how a focused effort and cooperation among the federal government, states and communities, law enforcement, safety advocates and industry can make an enormous difference," said NHTSA Administrator Mark Rosekind. "At the same time, the latest Roadside Survey raises significant questions about drug use and highway safety. The rising prevalence of marijuana and other drugs is a challenge to everyone who is dedicated to saving lives and reducing crashes."

The National Roadside Survey, conducted five times over the past 40 years, is a completely voluntary, anonymous survey that gathers data in dozens of locations across the country from drivers who agree to participate. The latest edition of the survey shows that the prevalence of alcohol use by drivers continues to drop. About 8% of drivers during weekend nighttime hours were found to have alcohol in their system, and just over 1% were found with 0.08% or higher breath alcohol content – the legal limit in every state. This is down by about 30% from the previous survey.

### TRAINING

**What Clinicians Need to Know About Problem Gambling** – April 27 – LRADAC Education Center, Columbia, SC

**Becoming Whole...An Advanced Spiritual Training** – May 21-23 – Asbury Hills Camp & Retreat Center, Cleveland, SC

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**DAODAS**  
Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services

### KUDOS TO...

DAODAS Intern **Sara Goldsby**, an MSW/MPH dual-degree student at the University of South Carolina, who has been named Student of the Year by the National Association of Social Workers-South Carolina Chapter!

**Pam Imm, Ph.D.**, Co- Chair of the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, who received the Society for Community Research and Action's 2015 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Practice in Community Psychology.

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of DAODAS. "Each year, innocent lives are lost as a result of motor vehicle crashes involving underage drinkers."

According to the S.C. Department of Public Safety, from 2007 to 2012, 2,877 drivers under 21 were involved in alcohol-related traffic crashes in South Carolina – an average of about 480 drivers a year. Preliminary traffic crash numbers reveal that approximately 400 drivers under 21 were involved in alcohol-related traffic crashes in 2013.

The first "Out of Their Hands" campaign included strict enforcement that ran for 11 days during the first part of April 2010. Beginning in 2011, the enforcement and education blitz extended throughout the entire month of April to cover South Carolina proms and spring breaks that typically occur from late March until early May, with a majority of events held in April.

As communities across the state finalize their AET enforcement and education plans, strategies will be posted on the campaign website at [SCOutOfTheirHands.org](http://SCOutOfTheirHands.org). The statewide effort involves 16 AETs that cover South Carolina's 46 counties.